

Working to honor and protect disabled veterans, Rep. Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) was presented the Legislative Recognition Award by the Blinded Veterans Association for her work in sponsoring legislation to wave copayments for veterans who are catastrophically disabled and thus face significant challenges in affording their health care.

"This award is an incredible honor. The Blinded Veterans Association is an organization that speaks for so many veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country, and who face significant challenges" said Halvorson. "We owe it to them to show our gratitude for what they've given, and one way to do to that is to relieve disabled veterans of the major financial burden of costly copayments.

"This is why the first bill I introduced as a Member of Congress was to eliminate these payments for catastrophically disabled veterans, and why I fought to pass it in the House. Congress needs to finish the job of honoring the work our veterans have done for us and send this legislation to the President."

The Blinded Veterans Association's Legislative Recognition Award is presented to Members of Congress who make extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of blinded veterans and their families.

"America's blinded veterans appreciate Representative Halvorson's efforts during the 111th Congress to ensure passage of H.R. 1335, which eliminates co-payments that are required of catastrophically disabled veterans needing inpatient blind rehabilitation services and often cannot afford them," said Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) Executive Director Tom Miller. "We recognize her perseverance and leadership to remedy this injustice by presenting her with the unique BVA Legislative Recognition Award."

As the only member from Illinois on the House Veterans Affairs Committee, Congresswoman Halvorson has been a strong advocate for wounded and disabled veterans. In her first year in office, Halvorson introduced and fought for several pieces of legislation aimed at helping wounded veterans and military families, including the *Families of Disabled Veterans Work Opportunity Act*, HR 3908, and the *Wounded Warrior Caregiver Assistance Act*, HR 2898.

